

## Message Text

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PAGE 01 DUBLIN 02384 040702Z  
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00  
PA-01 ICA-11 SP-02 L-03 HA-05 IO-13 /058 W  
-----091098 050146Z /13  
R 040656Z AUG 78  
FM AMEMBASSY DUBLIN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0849  
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMCONSUL BELFAST

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E.O. 11652: N/A  
TAGS: PINT, EI, UK, PEPR  
SUBJECT: O'FIAICH STATEMENT ON LONG KESH

REF; BELFAST 142

1. IRISH MEDIA AUGUST 2 HIGHLIGHTED STATEMENT BY  
ARCHBISHOP O'FIAICH CRITICIZING CONDITIONS IN  
LONG KESH, AND REPLY BY NORTHERN IRELAND OFFICE.  
DUBLIN MAJOR DAILIES ALL DEVOTED LEAD EDITORIALS  
TO SUBJECT. SKIRTING SUBSTANCE OF ISSUE, IRISH  
INDEPENDENT SAID MEN IN H BLOCK HAD BROUGHT  
SUFFERING ON THEMSELVES BUT A WAY SHOULD NONE-  
THELESS BE FOUND TO REMOVE THE SITUATION. IRISH  
PRESS HAD EQUALLY SHARP WORDS FOR PROVISIONAL IRA  
LEADERSHIP AND BRITISH GOVERNMENT: PROVO LEADERSHIP  
IS SMUGLY SATISFIED WITH ITS CAMPAIGN TO REACQUIRE  
POLITICAL STATUS FOR PRISONERS WHILE ITS MEN SUFFER  
AS A RESULT, BUT THE UKG HAS BEEN "DISGRACEFULLY  
REMISS" IN ALLOWING THE NORTHERN SITUATION TO DRIFT  
ON. THE MEN IN H BLOCK WILL CONTINUE TO SUFFER  
UNTIL A SERIOUS EFFORT IS MADE TO RESOLVE "THE WHOLE  
STINKING MESS -- NOT JUST LONG KESH." IRISH TIMES  
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SAID THE STATE MUST INTERVENE TO PROTECT LIFE --  
EVEN WHEN HUMAN BEINGS ARE RECKLESS IN ABUSE OF  
OWN LIVES. "DOES THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT HAVE TO  
WORRY ABOUT GIVING A LITTLE STATUS TO A FEW MEN  
WHO WILL NOT BE SEEN OUT AND ABOUT FOR YEARS?"

2. SEVERAL PAPERS NOTED THAT THE IRISH GOVERNMENT

HAS NOT YET COMMENTED ON THE MATTER. MFA OFFICIAL  
TOLD EMBOFF AUGUST 3 THAT GOI HAS CONSISTENTLY  
REFUSED TO GET INVOLVED IN ISSUE OF POLITICAL STATUS  
FOR PRISONERS IN NORTHERN IRELAND AND WILL NOT DO  
SO NOW. GOI IS SYMPATHETIC TO PLIGHT OF INDIVIDUALS  
AND THEIR FAMILIES BUT THE PRISONERS' CONDITIONS  
ARE LARGELY SELF-INFLICTED. OFFICIAL SAID GOI ALSO  
AWARE THAT UKG RESOLVED TO MAKE ABSOLUTELY NO CON-  
CESSIONS ON THIS ISSUE. THUS ANYONE SEEKING TO  
IMPROVE THE H BLOCK SITUATION SHOULD PRESS THE  
PROVISIONALS TO CALL OFF THE POLITICAL STATUS CAMPAIGN.  
(NOTE: THE GOI HAS NEVER ACKNOWLEDGED THE RIGHT  
OF CONVICTED PRISONERS HERE TO POLITICAL STATUS.)

3. COMMENT: REACTION HERE TO O'FIAICH AND NIO  
STATEMENTS HAS BEEN BALANCED AND CAUTIOUS, REFLECTING  
KEEN INTEREST IN THE SUBJECT BUT ACUTE AWARENESS  
THAT THE SOUTH HAS ITS OWN PROBLEMS WITH IMPRISONED  
PARAMILITARIES. SHANNON

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NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** PRESS COMMENTS, RELIGIOUS LEADERS, TERRORISTS, PRISONERS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 04 aug 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
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**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
**Film Number:** D780320-1317  
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**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
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**Reference:** 78 BELFAST 142  
**Retention:** 0  
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**Review Content Flags:**  
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**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
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**Review Release Date:** N/A  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
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**SAS ID:** 1839391  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** O\FIAICH STATEMENT ON LONG KESH  
**TAGS:** PINT, PEPR, SOPN, SHUM, EI, UK, (O\FIAICH, TOMAS)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
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